

Ayers to Pitch in Attempt to Make Third Straight Game From the Tigers

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NATIONALS EXPECTED TO BE LEADERS WHEN TRIP STARTS

Griffith to Take Entire Squad Excepting Ainsmith on Tour of Circuit—Ayers to Be Opposed by Hall or Coveleskie Today.

BY J. ED GRILLO.

It will be up to "Doc" Ayers today to strengthen the Nationals' hold on first place. If Ayers displays his usual good form the chances are that he will be returned a winner, and this would assure the team of starting on its long trip sole occupants of first place.

Griffith's team is not apt to suffer from the strain of leading the procession. It is not made up of nervous individuals who worry much. With the lead should come a lot of confidence, and if the team can continue its present pace there is a good chance for it to make a clean sweep of the Detroit series, which would assure it of starting on the road comfortably entrenched in first place. It is hoped that the team will prove as successful on the road as it has in the past, in which event it is sure to be in a good position when it returns here the latter part of June.

The pace the Nationals are setting is terrific. The team is playing a high grade of ball in every department, and seems to be blessed with strong pitching in all its games. Jennings will very likely use either Hall or Coveleskie in the game today. Both have been winners for the Tigers this spring and will not be easy to beat.

There is a vast improvement in the showing of the Nationals to date, compared with what it was exactly a year ago. May 27, 1913, both Cleveland and the Athletics were in front of the locals who occupied third place, with nineteen victories and fourteen defeats, for a percentage of 57. It has a fifty-point better percentage today and incidentally is showing much better form than at any time last season.

Eddie Ainsmith will be the only member of the Washington team who will not start out on the trip tomorrow. Though Ainsmith has removed the splint from his broken wrist, it is figured that it will be at least ten days or two weeks before he will be able to take his turn behind the bat, and he will probably join the team while it is in the west. But there will be no other stay-at-homes. Harper, Bentley, Williams, Engel and Cashion, together with the four regulars, will make up the pitching staff, while Wally Smith, Joe Gedeon and Acosta will make up the utility and out fielders. For a time, at least, Williams and Henry will do all the catching and, of course, Altrock and Schaefer will also be members of the party.

It is seldom that two third basemen give such brilliant exhibitions in a game as did Foster and Moriarty yesterday. Both of them helped the respective teams out of dangerous situations by marvelous stops and throws and both covered an unusual amount of ground about their positions. It was by far the busiest day Foster has had at any time this season. He is credited with seven assists, and most of these were hard chances.

Foster, who is playing the best ball of his career this season, is by far the most competent third baseman in the league. His ability to start double plays by means of quick and accurate throws is most remarkable and many is the game which he has saved by reason of his quick work in handling the ball.

Even the Nationals' opponents concede that the team is playing the best ball in the circuit right now. The Detroit players are loud in their praise of the locals in the series now on and are firm believers in the team's chances in the present campaign. Manager Jennings said yesterday that he believed the team which wins the flag this year would have to beat the Nationals to beat out.

"It's a great team, I'll admit," Mack said yesterday, "but you can't win pennants unless you have the men who can hold the opposing teams in check."

Joe Boehling displayed better form yesterday than he has in some time. He improved considerably as the game progressed, and his pitching in the final inning was sensational, striking out Crawford and Veach in rapid succession. He seemed to have Burns on the ragged edge when the ball got away from him and the Tigers' first baseman was hit, but Moriarty could do no more than hit a little fly to Gandil, ending the game. Boehling was a bit unsteady at the outset, but he held the Tigers in check sufficiently to allow his team to win by a one-run margin. Incidentally he figured in the scoring by driving in the first run in the third and later scoring himself.

Howard Shanks continues to do the cleaning up for his team. There have been innumerable occasions this spring when Shanks has come through with a long drive which has been productive, and yesterday was not an exception. With the score standing 2 to 1 in the sixth Shanks brought Gandil, who had singled, home with a long triple to center, which Heimann could not reach until it had bounded against the wall. Three-base hits are Shanks' specialty this spring.

It was by the merest scratch that Miami's record of hitting in consecutive games was not broken yesterday. He was hitless up to the last time up, when he dropped a little fly over Kavanagh's head for a single. Miami has now gone through twenty-five games without failing to get one or more hits.

It is doubtful if at any time during the seven years that George McBride has been holding down shortstop for the Nationals he has played as brilliant ball as this spring. McBride's fielding has not only been one of the features of the

HAS PUT HIS TEAM IN RACE BY PICKING SOME GOOD YOUNGSTERS



HUGHIE JENNINGS, Manager of the Tigers.

locals' games, but it has undoubtedly helped to many victories. There is not a shortstop in either major league who is McBride's superior, all things considered. He is not only a wonderful man in handling difficult grounders, but his throwing is most accurate, while when it comes to covering second base on attempted steals McBride never had an equal. McBride's value to the team is most appreciated by the other members of the team, who give him credit for being the backbone of the infield, which, by the way, is doing remarkable work to date.

There might have been a different story to tell of yesterday's game if Ty Cobb had been in the line-up. Heimann, who was in his place, had three different chances to drive runs over the plate, but failed in every instance. In the first inning there was a man on when Heimann came up, but McBride threw him out. Again in the sixth there were two on when he faced Boehling, but he could not get the ball safe, and in the eighth, with a man on, he hit into a double play, which killed the Tigers' chances. Now, Cobb might not have been able to do better, but his presence at the plate under such conditions would have had an entirely different effect on the pitcher and his supporters, and the chances are that the Tigers would have scored a run or two more.

Jack Bentley has made a record which marks him as being an effective pitcher. Counting the shut-out game which Bentley pitched against Connie Mack's rookies last fall, he has pitched seventeen innings and has not been scored on. He has been in several tight places in these games, but he has not allowed a run to cross the plate.

A little later in the season, when the stage of double-headers is encountered, Manager Griffith will be forced to use several of his young pitchers. Bentley will be one of these, and it would not be at all surprising if he makes good. Joe Engel and Cashion, too, may be used, so that it will not be necessary to work the four regulars, Johnson, Shaw, Boehling and Ayers, out of turn, thus keeping them in good form.

The most encouraging feature of the Nationals' play is in the fact that every man in the line-up is working for the best interests of the team. There is absolutely no individual playing noticeable and it is this fact which is giving the Nationals an advantage over some of their rivals. No team could play more intelligent ball than have the Nationals. This is evidenced not only in their work on the bases and at the bat, but also in their fielding. Every man on the team seems to know where to throw the ball.

Boehling was threatened in both the first and second inning, but got away without being scored on. Bush hit him in the first, but was forced out by Kavanagh, who was then caught napping off of first. In the second inning Boehling walked Crawford to start with and Veach moved him up to second with a sacrifice, but neither Burns or Moriarty could bring him home.

The Nationals were disposed of in order in the meantime, but got down to business in the third, when Dubuc hit McBride with a pitched ball. Henry advanced him with a sacrifice, and Boehling sent him home with a single to center. Moriarty was walked, and Foster hit a sharp grounder over second which Bush grabbed, but could not get to the bag in time to force Moriarty, and the bases were full. While Miami was forcing Foster, Boehling came home with the second run.

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Hit With Men on Sacks.
ST. LOUIS, May 27.—St. Louis hit Otto Hess with men on bases in three different innings yesterday, scoring four runs, while Boston was able to score only two runs off Doak. A wild pitch let in one of Boston's runs. In the fourth inning Wilson got a home run with a mail on base. Score: St. Louis..... 1 0 0 2 0 1 0 0 4-1
Boston..... 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 2-2
Two-base hit—Connolly. Home run—Wilson. Hits—off Doak, 8 in 7 1/3 innings; off Sallee, 1 in 1 2/3 innings. Errors—Doak, 2; Sallee, 1. Doak, Stolen bases—Doak, 1; Huggins, 1. Double plays—Magne to Beck; Cruise to Huggins; Hess to Huggins to Schmidt. Left on bases—Boston, 5; St. Louis, 1. First base on balls—off Doak, 2; off Boehling, 2; off Hess, 2. Wild pitch—Doak. Umpires—Messrs. Rigler and Emile. Time of game—1 hour and 40 minutes.

hout closed. White bled some, but was far the fresher at the end. White took the lead in the first round and had the Californian hanging on and struggling most of the round. The Chicago slow up, however, and Ritchie came back and took the lead in the second and third rounds. The remainder of the battle was White's, except the seventh and tenth periods, which were even.

The battle was one of the hardest ever seen here. Ritchie realized he was against a hard boy early in the fight and always met with hard left jabs to the jaw.

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THEY ARE, ARE THEY?

YES BUT THEY DON'T GROW EQUAL

By "Bud" Fisher